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**Information Gathering habits among Students of Affiliated Colleges
In Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India**

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Abstract:

Information gathering habit is an attempt to search for information in order to satisfy the requirements that occur out of a prerequisite to attain a goal. Here, the information system can be consulted either physically or through machine interaction. Hence one needs to be updated with the current trends in information in order to be on the fore fronts of modern generation. Based on the random sampling method sampling method used a set of questionnaires were distributed among 1200 students and 1068 questionnaires were duly received and considered for sorting. The response rate was 89%. The highest numbers of respondents were Male 386(36.14%) who used the 'Internet' to gather information. From the 625(58.52%) of the respondents in the category of UG, 165(15.45%) approached 'Library'. 365(34.18%) of them used the 'Internet', and highest respondents belonged to the category of UG 365(34.18%) who had 'Internet' access to gather information. From the Male respondents, 223(20.88%) accessed the 'Central library', 114(10.67%) used the 'Dept. Library', 52(4.87%) had access to 'Public library'. Among the total 625 (58.52%) respondents belonged to UG category, 215(20.13%) had access to 'Central library', and 120 (11.24%) of them used the 'Dept. Library', 56(5.24%) had access to the 'public library', 90(8.43%) accessed the 'Personal collection' for gathering information. The first priority was taken by the 'Internet' to gather information. 'Library' occupied the second preference as indicated by the respondents. The least preference to 'Personal'. Male respondents prioritized the 'Internet' to gather information. 'Library' was the second preference given by the respondents. The least preference was given for 'Personal'.

Keywords:

Information gathering, machine interaction, random sampling, Internet, Respondents

Introduction:

There are enormous information resources available as on today especially in the digital environment. Information needs and information seeking behaviour are the fundamental areas of research. In higher education systems, there is a provision for making use of these resources available through library. It is necessary for the libraries to move towards digital resources which are more helpful for easy access. In earlier days, the information produced in the world was available only in the printed form some information was in the non-printed form such as audio, visual sources, microfilm, etc., and are considered as non-book materials. The information world has witnessed a transition from print to electronic form. A change would not happen, all of a sudden, but it happens gradually. When a medium of publication changes, it requires time.

Concept of Information:

The following definitions apply in this study are either defined operationally or adapted from established definitions from authoritative sources. The Shannon and Weaver defines (2011), "Information is any stimulus that reduces uncertainty" and "as a purely quantitative measure of communicative exchanges". According to Chen and Herson (1982) "All knowledge, ideas, facts, data and imaginative works of mind which are communicated formally and/or informally in any format".

From the above definition it can be inferred that Information is a stimulus that consists of all knowledge; ideas; facts; data and imaginative works of mind which reduces uncertainty that makes a difference to a conscious of human mind as a purely quantitative measure of communicative exchanges, in a formal and/or informal format that are amenable for the user in an environment.

Information Gathering habits:

Information gathering habit is a purposeful attempt to seek for information and to satisfy the needs that arise out of a necessity to achieve an objective. Here, the information system is consulted either manually or through human computer interaction. In this process, the user consults books or journals or newspapers or any other physical resource or internet by applying information seeking attitudes in a broader sense, that is to say, macro level of application of behaviour. The micro level access/search patterns include activities from human computer interaction to physical and mental activities in searching for information. The activities include, using a mouse, clicking a web link, approaching a library shelves, evaluation among resources, determining a data and identifying its relevance, etc.

The behaviours which are involved as to how the information sought are put to use are termed as Information Use Behaviour. These behaviours deal with marking the information, adding it to the context to which it is sought, saving for further reference, etc. These activities involve physical as well as mental acts. Since libraries are user centric entities, even the least effort become more important in planning the library system and conducting research in modern library.

Objectives of the Study:

The framed objectives are;

1. To identify the purposes of information needs and gathering activities
2. To know the convenient session to gather information
3. To identify time spent for information gathering per week
4. To know the place of access of Information gathering activities

Methodology:

This study attempts to report the findings of the Information gathering habits of College Students with Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli. The primary data was collected through questionnaires from the respondents. Totally 1200 questionnaires were distributed to the students of Aided Colleges Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli. The random sampling method was used. Based on the sampling method the questionnaires were distributed to the available students at the time of data collection. Among students 1200 questionnaires were distributed and 1068 were received after duly filled. The response rate is 89%.

Analysis and Interpretation:

Distribution of Questionnaires among the Respondents

The Distribution of Questionnaires among the College Students with Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli has been analyzed based on the opinions and it is shown in the table.1.

Table 1: Distribution of Questionnaires among Students

Sl. No	Questionnaires Distributed	%	Questionnaires Received	%
1	1200	100	1068	89.00

Table 1 shows the distribution of questionnaires to the respondents from the aided colleges. Totally 1200 questionnaires were distributed to the students of affiliated Colleges of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli. Out of 1200, 1068 were replied and the response rate is 89.00%.

Place of access for Information gathering activities

The Place of access for Information gathering activities among the Aided college students is analyzed based on the opinion of the respondents and it is shown in the table 2

Table 2: Place of access of Information gathering activities

Sl. No	Place	Gender		Student		Total
		Male	Female	UG	PG	

1	Central Library	223 (20.88)	173 (16.2)	215 (20.13)	181 (16.95)	396 (37.08)
2	Dept. library	114 (10.67)	54 (5.06)	120 (11.24)	48 (4.49)	168 (15.73)
3	Public library	52 (4.87)	40 (3.75)	56 (5.24)	36 (3.37)	92 (8.61)
4	Personal collections	86 (8.05)	34 (3.18)	90 (8.43)	30 (2.81)	120 (11.24)
5	College computer centre	56 (5.24)	74 (6.93)	86 (8.05)	44 (4.12)	130 (12.17)
6	Cyber café	42 (3.93)	56 (5.24)	18 (1.69)	80 (7.49)	98 (9.18)
7	Personal Computer	38 (3.56)	26 (2.43)	40 (3.75)	24 (2.25)	64 (5.99)
	Total	611 (57.21)	457 (42.79)	625 (58.52)	443 (41.48)	1068 (100)

(Figures in the parentheses denote percentage)

It is revealed from the table 2 shows that the place of access to gather information with respect to the Gender. The place of access to gather information categories as follows: Central library', 'Dept. library', 'Public library', 'Personal collections', 'College computer centre', 'Cyber cafe' and 'Personal computer'. From the category of Male respondents, 223(20.88%) access in 'Central library', 114(10.67% access in 'Dept. library', 52(4.87%) access in 'Public library', 86(8.05%) access in 'Personal collections' for information gathering activities. In Female, 40(3.75%) access in 'Public library', 34(3.18%) access in 'Personal collections', 74(6.93%) access in 'College computer centre', 56(5.24%) access in 'Cyber cafe' and 26(2.43%) access in 'Personal computer' for information gathering activities. It is identified from the table the highest number of respondents are in the category of Male 223(20.88%) who access at 'Central Library' for information gathering activities.

Followed by the place of access to gather information, the category of the students is analyzed. From the 625(58.52%) of the respondents in the category of UG, 215(20.13%) access in 'Central library', 120(11.24%) of them access in 'Dept. Of Library', 56(5.24%) access in 'public library', 90(8.43%) access 'Personal collection' for information gathering activities. 443(41.48%) of the respondents are in the category of PG, 85(7.96%) of them access in 'Library', 294(27.53%) access in 'Internet', 30(2.81%) access in 'personal collections', 44(4.12%) access in 'College computer centre', 80(7.49%) access in 'Cybercafe' and 24(2.25%) access at 'Personal computer' for information gathering activities. It is identified from the table, the highest numbers of respondents are in the category of UG 215(20.13%) who access in 'central library' for information gathering activities.

Time spent for information gathering per week

The study analyzes the Time spent for information gathering per week by the aided college students. The three point scales of Less than 2 hrs, 2-5 hrs and more than 5 hrs were used for the study. The Mean, Standard Deviation and their Rank for Time spent for information gathering per week to gather Information is calculated and it is shown in the table 3.

Table 3: Time spent for information gathering per week

Sl. No	Place	Less than 2 hrs	2-5 hrs	More than 5 hrs	M	Std. Dev	Rank
1	Library	29 (2.69)	278 (25.79)	761 (70.59)	2.69	.520	2
2	Internet	75 (6.96)	167 (15.49)	826 (76.62)	2.70	.591	1
3	Personal	120 (11.13)	171 (15.86)	777 (72.08)	2.62	.680	3

It is identified from Table 3 that the respondents give first priority for the place of 'Internet' to gather information. 'Library' is their second preference and the least preference is given for 'Personal'. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 2.62 and 2.70. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies on the time frequency of 'More than 5 hours' to spent time for information gathering activities. The deviation of opinion ranges between .520 and .680.

Time spent for information gathering per week Vs Gender

The study is further extended to Gender category for the Time spent to gather information per week by the respondents. The Mean, Standard Deviation and their Rank for the Time spent for information gathering per week is calculated and it is shown in the table 4.

Table 4: Time spent for information gathering per week Vs Gender

Sl. No	Place	Male			Female			Chi-Square
		M	SD	R	M	SD	R	
1	Library	2.65	.544	2	2.73	.483	1	5.770
2	Internet	2.69	.596	1	2.72	.585	2	1.644
3	Personal	2.59	.706	3	2.65	.643	3	3.485

(M-Mean, SD-Standard Deviation, R-Rank, Degrees of Freedom: 2, Table Value: 5.991)

It can be inferred from Table 4 that the Male respondents give first priority for the place of 'Internet' to gather information. 'Library' is their second preference and the least preference is given for the place of 'Personal'. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 2.59 and 2.69. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies on the time frequency

‘More than 5 hours’ to spent for information gathering activities. The deviation of opinion ranges between .544 and .706.

In the case of Female, the respondents give first priority for the place of ‘Library’ to gather information. ‘Internet’ is the second preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for the place of ‘Personal’. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 2.65 and 2.73. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies on the time frequency of ‘More than 5 hours’ to spent for information gathering activities. The deviation of opinion ranges between .483 and .643.

Time spent for information gathering per week Vs Student

The study is further extended to Student category for the Time spent to gather information per week. The Mean, Standard Deviation and their Rank for Time spent for information gathering per week is calculated and it is shown in the table 5.

Table 5: Time spent for information gathering per week Vs Student

Sl. No	Place	UG			PG			Chi-Square
		M	SD	R	M	SD	R	
1	Library	2.68	.524	2	2.70	.515	1	.808
2	Internet	2.74	.538	1	2.65	.656	2	11.654
3	Personal	2.63	.660	3	2.60	.706	3	2.949

(M-Mean, SD-Standard Deviation, R-Rank, Degrees of Freedom: 2, Table Value: 5.991)

It can be seen from table 5 that the respondents in the category of UG have given first priority for the place of ‘Internet’ to gather information. ‘Library’ is the second preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for the place of ‘Personal’. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 2.63 and 2.74. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies on time frequency of ‘More than 5 hours’ to spent for information gathering activities. The deviation of opinion ranges between .524 and .660.

In the category of PG, the respondents give first priority for the place of ‘Library’ to gather information. ‘Internet’ is their second preference and the least preference is given for the place of ‘Personal’. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 2.60 and 2.70. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies on time frequency of ‘More than 5 hours’ to spent for information gathering activities. The deviation of opinion ranges between .515 and .706.

Convenient session to gather information

The study analyzes the convenient session to gather information among the aided college student. The five point scales of In-convenient, slightly convenient, Fairly Convenient, Convenient and highly convenient are used for the study. The Mean, Standard Deviation and their Rank for convenient session to gather information are calculated and it is shown in the table 6..

Table 6: Convenient session to gather information

Sl. No	Session	In-convenient	Slightly convenient	Fairly Convenient	Convenient	Highly convenient	M	Std. Dev	R
1	Morning	35 (3.28)	37 (3.46)	132 (12.36)	112 (10.49)	752 (70.41)	4.41	1.045	1
2	Interval	32 (3)	65 (6.09)	94 (8.8)	453 (42.42)	424 (39.7)	4.10	.995	4
3	Lunch break	29 (2.72)	66 (6.18)	245 (22.94)	312 (29.21)	416 (38.95)	3.96	1.053	5
4	During class hours	36 (3.37)	43 (4.03)	177 (16.57)	325 (30.43)	487 (45.6)	4.11	1.037	3
5	Evening	31 (2.9)	41 (3.84)	178 (16.67)	229 (21.44)	589 (55.15)	4.22	1.042	2

(Figures in the parentheses denote percentage)

It is identified from Table 6 that the respondents give first priority for the session of 'Morning' to gather information to update the knowledge. 'Evening' and 'During class hours' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for the session of 'Lunch break'. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 3.96 and 4.41. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies between 'Convenient' and 'Highly convenient'. The deviation of opinion ranges between .995 and 1.053.

Convenient session to gather information VS Gender

The study is further extended to Gender category for the convenient session to gather information. The Mean, Standard Deviation and their Rank for convenient session to gather information Vs Gender are calculated and it is shown in the table 7.

Table 7: Convenient session to gather information VS Gender

Sl. No	Session	Male			Female			Chi-Square
		M	SD	R	M	SD	R	
1	Morning	4.33	1.094	1	4.52	.967	1	28.910

2	Interval	3.89	1.088	4	4.38	.771	3	81.720
3	Lunch break	3.81	1.127	5	4.15	.910	5	48.904
4	During class hours	4.00	1.076	3	4.26	.964	4	26.993
5	Evening	4.02	1.125	2	4.49	.851	2	55.115

(M-Mean, SD-Standard Deviation, R-Rank, Degrees of Freedom: 4, Table Value: 9.488)

It can be inferred from Table 7 that the Male respondents give first priority for the session of 'Morning' to gather information to update the knowledge. 'Evening' and 'During class hours' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for the session of 'Lunch break'. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 3.81 and 4.33. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies between 'Convenient' and 'Highly convenient'. The deviation of opinion ranges between 1.076 and 1.127.

In the case of Female, they give first priority for the session of 'Morning' to gather information. 'Evening' and 'Interval' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for the session of 'Lunch break'. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 4.15 and 4.52. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies between 'Convenient' and 'Highly convenient'. The deviation of opinion ranges between .771 and .967.

Convenient session to gather information Vs Student

The study is further extended to Student category for the convenient session to gather information by the respondents. The Mean, Standard Deviation and their Rank for convenient session to gather information Vs Student are calculated and it is shown in the table 8.

Table 8: Convenient session to gather information Vs Student

Sl. No	Session	UG			PG			Chi-Square
		M	SD	R	M	SD	R	
1	Morning	4.48	1.021	1	4.31	1.071	2	32.748
2	Interval	4.16	1.067	2	4.02	.878	5	117.473
3	Lunch break	3.86	1.056	5	4.09	1.036	4	48.500
4	During class hours	3.99	.989	4	4.27	1.080	3	80.172
5	Evening	4.03	1.018	3	4.49	1.014	1	128.036

(M-Mean, SD-Standard Deviation, R-Rank, Degrees of Freedom: 4, Table Value: 9.488)

It can be seen from Table 8 that the respondents in the category of UG give first priority for the session of 'Morning' to gather information. 'Interval' and 'Evening' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for the session of 'Lunch break'. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 3.86 and 4.48. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies between 'Convenient' and 'Highly convenient'. The deviation of opinion ranges between .989 and 1.067.

In the case of PG, the respondents give first priority for the session of 'Evening' to gather information. 'Morning' and 'during class hours' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for the session of 'Interval'. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 4.02 and 4.49. It can be inferred that all the five variables lies between 'Convenient' and 'Highly convenient'. The deviation of opinion ranges between .878 and 1.080.

Purpose of information gathering activities

The study analyzes the Purpose of information gathering activities among the aided college students. The five point scales of Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often and More often are used for the study. The Mean, Standard Deviation and their Rank Purpose of information gathering activities are calculated and it is shown in the table 9.

Table 9: Purpose of information gathering activities

Sl. No	Purpose	Never	Rarely	Some times	Often	More often	M	Std. Dev	R
1	For knowledge updation	32 (3)	58 (5.43)	81 (7.58)	285 (26.69)	612 (57.3)	4.30	1.023	4
2	For Examination work	29 (2.72)	66 (6.18)	69 (6.46)	250 (23.41)	654 (61.24)	4.34	1.026	2
3	To attend the conference, symposium, seminar etc.	31 (2.9)	64 (5.99)	90 (8.43)	301 (28.18)	582 (54.49)	4.25	1.033	5
4	For academic improvement	29 (2.72)	66 (6.18)	29 (2.72)	255 (23.88)	689 (64.51)	4.41	.997	1
5	To keep up-to-date on subjects of interest	32 (3)	65 (6.09)	86 (8.05)	346 (32.4)	539 (50.47)	4.21	1.027	7
6	For self improvement	29 (2.72)	66 (6.18)	70 (6.55)	259 (24.25)	644 (60.3)	4.33	1.025	3
7	For recreational purpose	32 (3)	65 (6.09)	90 (8.43)	334 (31.27)	547 (51.22)	4.22	1.031	6

(Figures in the parentheses denote percentage)

It is identified from Table 9 that the respondents give first priority 'For academic improvement'. 'For Examination work' and 'For self improvement' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for 'To keep up-to-date on subjects of interest'. The mean value of all the variables ranges between 4.21 and 4.41. It can be inferred that all the seven variables lies between 'Often' and 'More Often'. The deviation of opinion ranges between .997 and 1.033.

Purpose of information gathering activities Vs Gender

The study is further extended to Gender category for the Purpose of information gathering activities by the respondents. The Mean, Standard Deviation and their Rank for Purpose of information gathering activities Vs Gender are calculated and it is shown in the table 10.

Table 10: Purpose of information gathering activities Vs Gender

Sl. No	Purpose	Male			Female			Chi-Square
		M	SD	R	M	SD	R	
1	For knowledge up gradation	4.13	1.143	3	4.53	.781	5	59.802
2	For Examination work	4.15	1.134	2	4.60	.792	2	71.642
3	To attend the conference, symposium, seminar etc.	4.01	1.142	6	4.58	.748	3	95.824
4	For academic improvement	4.30	1.132	1	4.56	.756	4	49.304
5	To keep up-to-date on subjects of interest	4.04	1.149	5	4.45	.777	7	73.468
6	For self improvement	4.11	1.144	4	4.62	.748	1	75.178
7	For recreational purpose	4.01	1.142	6	4.49	.781	6	75.593

(M-Mean, SD-Standard Deviation, R-Rank, Degrees of Freedom: 4, Table Value: 9.488)

It can be inferred from Table 10 that the Male respondents give first priority 'For academic improvement'. 'For Examination work' and 'For knowledge up gradation' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given 'To attend the conference, symposium, seminar etc.' The mean value of all the variables ranges between 4.06 and 4.30. It can be inferred that all the seven variables lies between 'Often' and 'More Often'. The deviation of opinion ranges between 1.342 and 1.149.

In the case of Female, the respondents give first priority 'For self improvement'. 'For Examination work' and 'To attend the conference, symposium, seminar etc.' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for 'To keep up-to-date on subjects of interest.' The mean value of all the variables ranges between 4.45 and

4.62. It can be inferred that all the seven variables lies on 'More Often'. The deviation of opinion ranges between .748 and .792.

Purposes of information gathering activities Vs Student

The study is further extended to student category for the Purpose of information gathering activities by the respondents. The Mean, Standard Deviation and their Rank for Purpose of information gathering activities are calculated and it is shown in the table 11.

Table 11: Purposes of information gathering activities Vs Student

Sl. No	Purpose	UG			PG			Chi-Square
		M	SD	R	M	SD	R	
1	For knowledge up gradation	4.27	1.060	3	4.34	.969	4	28.786
2	For Examination work	4.25	1.030	5	4.47	1.007	1	41.444
3	To attend the conference, symposium, seminar etc.	4.24	1.070	6	4.28	.979	5	30.431
4	For academic improvement	4.43	.995	1	4.39	1.001	3	34.127
5	To keep up-to-date on subjects of interest	4.26	1.088	4	4.14	.931	7	109.419
6	For self improvement	4.28	1.053	2	4.40	.982	2	54.219
7	For recreational purpose	4.19	1.076	7	4.25	.965	6	34.781

(M-Mean, SD-Standard Deviation, R-Rank, Degrees of Freedom: 4, Table Value: 9.488)

It can be seen from table 11 that the respondents in the category of UG give first 'For academic improvement'. 'For self improvement' and 'For knowledge up gradation' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given 'For recreational purpose' The mean value of all the variables ranges between 4.19 and 4.43. It can be inferred that all the seven variables lies between 'Often' and 'More Often'. The deviation of opinion ranges between .995 and 1.088.

In the category of PG, the respondents give first priority 'For Examination work'. 'For self improvement' and 'For academic improvement' are the second and third preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for 'To keep up-to-date on subjects of interest' The mean value of all the variables ranges between 4.14 and 4.47. It can be inferred that all the seven variables lies between 'Often' and 'More Often'. The deviation of opinion ranges between .931 and 1.007.

Findings

- The highest numbers of respondents are in the category of Male 386(36.14%) approach 'Internet' access to gather information.
- From the 625(58.52%) of the respondents in the category of UG, 165(15.45%) approach 'Library', 365(34.18%) of them approach 'Internet', and highest numbers of

respondents are in the category of UG 365(34.18%) approach 'Internet' access to gather information.

- From the Male respondents, 223(20.88%) access in 'Central library', 114(10.67%) access in 'Dept. library', 52(4.87%) access in 'Public library',
- From the 625(58.52%) of the respondents in the category of UG, 215(20.13%) access in 'Central library', 120(11.24%) of them access in 'Dept. Of Library', 56(5.24%) access in 'public library', 90(8.43%) access at 'Personal collection' for gathering information.
- The respondents give first priority for the place of 'Internet' to gather information. 'Library' is the second preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for the place of 'Personal'.
- Male respondents give first priority for the place of 'Internet' to gather information. 'Library' is the second preference given by the respondents. The least preference is given for the place of 'Personal'.

Conclusion

Now days the academic libraries play a vital role to the development of higher educational systems in Tamil Nadu. Due to the development of Information and communication technology, it influences the reading habits as well as information gathering habits among the college students. The academic library professionals are providing services to attract the user communities in various forms like conferences, Seminars, Workshop and training programs. And also the user expectation is changed due to the development of various information sources and information providers.

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